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Angola, China, and Southern Africa

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- JOHN S. SAUL
- THE EDITORS

Vietnam in the Year of the Dragon

TRAN VAN DINH

In Memoriam: Oliver Cox

GORDON D. MORGAN

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

In our January issue (p. 51) we reported that a group of Chilean exiles in Argentina, all academics or professionals and all members of the Chilean Socialist Party, had been arrested and imprisoned by the Argentine authorities. Among them was Ernesto Benado, a professor of engineering and director of the Spanish-language edition of MONTHLY REVIEW during the years it was published in Santiago. From what meager information we could obtain at the time, we understood that after three months they would be eligible for deportation to countries of their choice provided they had valid entry visas. The three months passed, however, and they were not released. Then in March came the military coup in Argentina, resulting in the wiping out of whatever remnants of legal protection for civil liberties still existed in that tortured country. Since then fears for the safety of the imprisoned Chileans—and in truth all other Chileans who had fled to Argentina—have been mounting. The greatest danger is that they will

(Continued on inside back cover)

ANGOLA, CHINA, AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

We publish below two texts received since the publication in our February issue of Azinna Nwafor's "The Liberation of Angola." The first, "China and Angola," is by Clark Kissinger, a New Left student activist of the 1960s who is now a factory worker in the Chicago area and a member of the National Steering Committee of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association. The second, "Angola and After," is by John Saul, a frequent contributor to MR (most recently with "Free Mozambique," December 1975) and co-author with Giovanni Arrighi of MR Press book *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa*. John Saul taught political science at the University of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, for many years and now works in Toronto with the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC). This article is a slightly abridged and edited version of one which appeared in the Canadian radical periodical *This Magazine* (56 Esplanade St. E, Toronto, Canada) of which John Saul is one of the editors. A comment by the editors of MR follows the Kissinger and Saul texts.—The Editors

CHINA AND ANGOLA

By C. Clark Kissinger

"The Liberation of Angola" by Azinna Nwafor which appeared as the Review of the Month in the February 1976 MR unfortunately contributed negatively to an understanding of China's foreign policy in the current world situation. Summarized briefly, Nwafor asserts that (1) the People's Republic of China is involved in Angola on the side of imperialism, (2) China sees the contention between the United States and the Soviet Union as the prime motive force of history at this time, (3) China is denying the necessity of revolutionary civil war, (4) China is denying that things develop primarily as the

result of their *internal* contradictions, and (5) China denies the necessity of external support from "international revolutionary forces."

China's policy in Angola (as elsewhere in the Third World) has been to consistently oppose the intervention of all imperialists, support the armed struggle of the people for their independence, and urge the unity of all those forces which can be united to fight the main enemy. During the period of armed struggle against the Portuguese, China supported all three Angolan liberation organizations in their struggle against Portugal, received delegations from all three in China, and aided all three militarily. And, as a matter of fact, the MPLA received more assistance from China than did the other two organizations.

Following the coup in Portugal, the new Portuguese government announced its intention to grant independence to Angola, and a ceasefire in Angola was arranged. At the urging of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) all three Angolan liberation organizations announced the formation of a coalition government to administer the new state. With the ceasefire in the fighting against Portugal and the announced unity of the three principal Angolan organizations, China immediately ceased the shipment of military supplies to all three groups.

The behavior of the imperialist states was just the opposite. During the independence struggle of the Angolan people, the United States underwrote the military effort of the Portuguese while at the same time hedging its bet by selective assistance to its favorite Angolan nationalist groupings. The Soviet Union, as a part of its general thrust against the U.S. empire, favored the MPLA with limited military supplies. Then the sudden collapse of the overseas Portuguese empire set off a mad scramble between the two superpowers to pick up the pieces from the Canary Islands to Timor.

The Soviet Union had never found it possible to give decisive aid in the struggle against the Portuguese. But immediately after the ceasefire agreed upon with the Portuguese, it suddenly became possible to supply massive quantities of the most sophisticated weapons and to fly in 12,000 colonial troops from Cuba to fuel one side in a fratricidal civil war. Similarly the United States, having lost its bet on the Portuguese, leapt to

the support of the other side with arms, mercenaries, and an invasion of South African troops. The results of this struggle are now well known.

Throughout this imperialist-instigated struggle, China continued its policy of urging internal Angolan unity to achieve real national independence and to expel *all* foreign imperialists. This was not because China denied the existence of class contradictions within Angola, or saw all the Angolan organizations in the same light. It flowed from the correct assessment that the collapse of the Portuguese, rather than being the end to foreign imperialism in Angola, in fact heralded a new period of intense imperialist rivalry in Africa, in which the Angolan people would have to face imperialists of incomparably greater strength than the Portuguese. The situation was in some ways similar to that faced by the Chinese people with the Japanese invasion of China. The ultimate resolution of the question as to which class would rule was not resolved (by revolutionary civil war) until the Chinese people as a whole (in a Communist-Kuomintang united front) had defeated the imperialist invasion.

“The world is in great turmoil. The future is bright.”

The turmoil comes from the Soviet Union’s bold gambles to redivide the world in recognition of its rise as a great capitalist power, and the frantic efforts of the United States to retain the status quo. In this setting, the United States most frequently finds itself supporting its existing client regimes, while the Soviet Union takes advantage of popular struggles for independence to gain a foothold and weaken its imperial adversary. In such situations it is most necessary to grasp the class nature of the Russian state. As an instructive example, it is helpful to recall how, in its struggle to redivide the decaying Spanish empire, the young U.S. imperialists came to “aid” the valiant struggle of the Cuban people to overthrow Spanish rule in 1898.

The future is bright because the main trend in the era of dying imperialism and proletarian revolution is revolution. But when one of the great imperialists masks itself as “socialist,” while pursuing a course toward world war, all revolutionary forces in the world must be crystal clear as to its nature and its aims. This is not to say that the people in their struggles can never take advantage of contradictions between the superpowers,

but that—the Chinese have an apt phrase for it—it does little good to drive the wolf away from the front door if in so doing one lets the tiger in by the back.

ANGOLA AND AFTER

By John S. Saul

The Angolan situation has been widely misinterpreted (often quite wilfully, it would seem) in conventional, liberal/conservative circles in Canada, but also in some radical ones. Rather surprisingly, the essence of such misinterpretations has been similar. It stems from a temptation to ignore the concrete history of the struggle in Angola and the specific social and political characteristics of the territory itself. The result is the reduction of the full complexity of the situation there to a mere manifestation of “great-power politics.”

Thus, in the Canadian mainstream, concern about the role of the Soviet Union and its assistance to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) holds interpretative sway, with the hoariest old cold-war mythologies of the 1950s being dusted off to distort the claim of the MPLA to primacy. In the process, that movement’s twenty years of political and military struggle are consigned to limbo, its long-term historical thrust reduced to some mere manipulation from Moscow (whether this be interpreted as direct manipulation or as being orchestrated via Havana). From this perspective, the “pro-Western” FNLA and UNITA are viewed as nobly battling the “Soviet-backed” MPLA; and even South Africa—the very heart of brutal white hegemony in southern Africa—has been allowed to appropriate the halo of resistance to “Communist aggression.” This in spite of the fact that the latter country has actually *invaded* Angola in order to challenge MPLA’s attempts to consolidate independence!

Left of center, there has been the curiously parallel tendency to emphasize, in quasi-Maoist fashion, the dangers of “superpower rivalry” and “Soviet social imperialism,” and on this basis to deny support to MPLA in spite of the latter movement’s indisputable claim to represent the most vibrant and

praiseworthy forces thrown up by the Angolan revolution. This, in turn, has led either to an irrelevant call to support "the Angolan people" (somehow miraculously freed of internal turmoil) or, at worst, to actual backing for UNITA and/or FNLA over and against MPLA. Even the fact that any such posture places Canadian militants firmly in concert with South African and American designs in the area seems not to have dissuaded some of them from their foolhardy course.

Both these sets of distortions are of interest, the "Maoist" variant because of what it reveals about the pathology of the left in Canada, the conventional variant because of what it reveals about the strength of a phalanx of news media which is profoundly hostile to revolutionary change and a political consensus which is blandly and unreflectively "liberal."* To the pathology of the left we shall return. As for the heavy weight of "conventional wisdom," we need only consider the terrifying ease with which Canadian "public opinion" could move, in a matter of a few weeks, from a point where almost no one in the country had even the most minimal awareness of Angola to a point where virtually everyone did have an opinion—albeit the same opinion and a grievously erroneous one. Once again, the true character of the African challenge to the racist and imperialist status quo in southern Africa had been denatured for public consumption by press and politicians. Equally unsettling is the likelihood that such distortion will increase as the battle for southern Africa draws closer to the core of racist oppression and Western involvement in the area—South Africa itself. The Angolan case demonstrates clearly the difficult work ahead for all those who would seek to advance the cause of the African liberation struggle in this country.

* * *

The key to a more realistic analysis of what has transpired in Angola lies precisely in turning the above viewpoints inside out, starting not with a global formula but with an historical

* On this subject see "Liberals and Liberation" by the Toronto Committee for Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC) in *This Magazine*, May-June, 1975, an essay which now comprises a chapter of TCLSAC's longer book, *Words and Deeds: Canada, Portugal and Africa*, available from the Committee at 121 Avenue Rd., Toronto.

analysis of the Angolan liberation movements which have now laid claim to world attention. A statement made at the time of the Portuguese departure from Angola (November 1975) by Samora Machel, President of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), provides the best starting point:

Let me speak to you about how Mozambicans regard the events in Angola. For us, the problem is posed in the following way: Who has led and is leading the struggle in Angola? And against whom? Who is the enemy? Who is responsible for the destruction of both human life and villages? Who shoots, who kills the people? We have analyzed the Angolan situation throughout the many years of its evolution. We have asked ourselves: Who has really struggled against colonialism? Who has really fought?

There is no doubt that it is the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) which has directed and continues to direct the struggle in Angola. And today, just as the Portuguese colonialists are departing, when the Angolan people, who identify strongly with the MPLA, prepare to celebrate their victory, just as they are about to enjoy the fruits of their liberty, various groups guided by imperialism try to impede the process of liberation in order to delay independence and leave the way open for foreign military intervention.

What one must understand, the whole of Africa must realize, is that the outcome of the revolution in Africa is being determined right now in Angola. As in the past, we have always supported the MPLA, with whom we are allied. We are continuing and will continue our support. This act is neither spontaneous nor impulsive. Our relations of concrete and effective solidarity have been forged in the course of a long struggle against the same enemies. Because for a long time we have defined the common enemy according to common principles and with common objectives in mind.

A brief consideration of the two movements which have been advanced as alternatives to MPLA confirms the strength of this perspective. Certainly, as regards Holden Roberto's Front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA) there is no room for even the slightest misunderstanding. Militarily active only very briefly in the early 1960s, it quickly retired to Congo-Kinshasa (now Zaire) where, under the patronage of the sinister President Mobutu, it passively awaited an invitation to participate in any neocolonial solution which might be forthcoming in Angola. As recent American disclosures have documented,

the movement was ultimately deactivated, with Holden Roberto for some years being granted only a \$10,000-a-year retainer as "information-gatherer" for the CIA.

"Reactivated," in the pungent phrase of one American official, after the Portuguese coup of 1974 and soon enjoying material assistance from China as well as from Zaire and the United States, FNLA played the only card it could in the Angolan power game.* Lacking a vigorous popular base such as might have been nurtured through years of guerrilla activity, it fell back upon the desperate use of brute military force—in Luanda, the capital of Angola, and throughout the north—in an attempt to block MPLA. Fortunately, the judgment of Nathaniel Davis proved sound. Kissinger's man-in-Africa (as he had once been his man-in-Chile), Davis resigned from the State Department in opposition to the American policy of backing FNLA and UNITA and striving to isolate MPLA. His reason: the former two movements couldn't fight their way out of a paper bag (as he put it)! In fact, much of the fighting in northern Angola, while it lasted, was carried out by Zairean troops and by white mercenaries.

The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) also was insignificant militarily during the colonial period. Al J. Venter's *The Terror-Fighters*, a first-hand and knowledgeable early-1970s appraisal of Portugal's wars in Africa, written from the South African side, scarcely mentions this movement, emphasizing that the Portuguese attached importance only to the threat from MPLA. Basil Davidson's magisterial *In the Eye of the Storm: Angola's People*, also written at first-hand but from the side of liberation, came to a parallel

* Chinese backing for such a movement—weaponry until June/July 1975, advisors until at least November—can only be explained in terms of that country's misapplication to the Angolan situation of its stance of global hostility towards the USSR, as if Soviet support for MPLA exhausted the meaning and significance of the latter. Similarly, China's continued and irrelevant post-November calls for "unity," combined with the shrill invective against "Soviet social imperialism" which has led, in practice, to a downgrading of MPLA's claims in Angola, must have similar roots. At best, this policy has represented a grievous mistake on the part of the Chinese.

conclusion. More recently, Davidson's suspicion that UNITA—small and ineffectual—existed mainly on sufferance of the Portuguese has been given weight by letters, released in Portugal after the coup, which show Jonas Savimbi, the UNITA leader, to have been in close touch with the Portuguese during the “war years,” exchanging arms and information. Add to this a telling statement from former Portuguese dictator Marcelo Caetano's autobiography, *Depoimento*, to the effect that the strategy of Costa Gomes and Betancourt Rodriguez on Angola's eastern front in the early seventies “included negotiations with UNITA, a group of rebels which, under the leadership of Savimbi, was operating there against MPLA,” and you soon have a picture of no movement at all during the long years of struggle.

Small wonder that Savimbi was first to announce a cease-fire in Angola—in June 1974, even as PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, FRELIMO in Mozambique, and MPLA were intensifying the military struggle against the intrigues of General Spínola, still President of Portugal. Or that Savimbi could show up on the Isle of Sal in September 1974, to plot with Mobutu, Holden Roberto, and Spínola as to how best to sidetrack MPLA, a meeting whose immediate outcome the (London) *Sunday Times* could summarize by saying that “Spínola's elaborate courtship with Mobutu, Roberto, and Savimbi has made Angola safe for capitalism—for the moment.” (“Angola: The Carve-up of Africa's El Dorado,” October 20, 1974) To reinforce this possibility Savimbi soon found himself bankrolled by right-wing Portuguese business interests in Angola, then allied with well-heeled American agents, European mercenaries, and ultimately the South African army itself. As Samora Machel concluded the statement cited above: “In Angola, two forces are confronting each other: on the one hand, imperialism and its allies and its puppets; on the other, the progressive popular forces which support MPLA. *There is nothing else.*”

Against this dismal record we can set that of MPLA. Media coverage—and some left debate—might lead one to think that this movement had emerged only in recent months, despite the fact of its having been founded in the mid-fifties and having engaged in 15 years of armed struggle. Hampered by lack of access via Zaire to the most populous regions of Angola, MPLA

first built an effective military presence in the Cabinda enclave and then, operating from Zambia after 1964, in eastern Angola, slowly but surely pushing westward during subsequent years. Equally important, it began to develop the social infrastructure of a new Angola in the liberated areas (see Davidson). Perhaps MPLA was somewhat behind FRELIMO militarily and politically when the Portuguese coup came in 1974. The scattered population of the east made that a difficult terrain for triggering off the same "logic of protracted struggle" which had served to radicalize FRELIMO.* Moreover, internal tensions—orchestrated by opportunistic and conservative elements within the movement (the Chipenda faction) and by Portuguese intrigues—continued to rack the movement right up until the time of the coup. Nonetheless, a process of radicalization had begun and a direction been set, and it was this increasing clarity of purpose, forged in the struggle, against which "the West" reacted. Clearly, outside interests—Zaire, South Africa, the United States, and Western European countries—have felt threatened in Angola, not so much by the presence of Soviet arms and Cuban troops as by the promise of a genuine and radical decolonization which MPLA represents. For any such decolonization could be seen to involve, sooner or later, a stiff challenge to corporate access to Angola's riches, a tantalizing and attractive counter-example to faltering neocolonial projects in the area (e.g., Zaire, Zambia), and a firm base for the escalating struggle, spearheaded by SWAPO in bordering Namibia, a territory now occupied illegally by South Africa.

The shift of the center of MPLA's activities after the coup to the crowded capital city of Luanda—MPLA's original spawning ground in the fifties and a long-time source of underground support—served to reinforce the movement's radicalization. In the wake of General Spínola's ouster from power in post-coup Portugal, MPLA, alone of the three movements,

* A study of the "logic of protracted struggle" in the Mozambican case and its effect upon FRELIMO and its policies can be found in the author's essay "FRELIMO and the Mozambique Revolution," in Giovanni Arrighi and John S. Saul, *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa* (Monthly Review Press, 1973).

tried to make the short-lived, power-sharing Angolan transitional government work; then moved, under siege, to establishment of the independent People's Republic of Angola in November 1975. But during both phases the movement was increasingly premising its activity upon *Poder Popular*, people's power, a program which involved the establishment of vital organs of popular participation everywhere at the base of the new system. Spurned from the outset by FNLA and UNITA as a dangerously democratic departure but real enough in its practice to have impressed even some of the most jaded of Western correspondents, *Poder Popular* has been one of the crucial features distinguishing MPLA's positive plans for a transformed Angola from those of its rivals. Moreover, this program has begun to be a springboard for the distinctive departures in the direction of workers' control in industry and for a move toward collective productive activity in the rural sphere (to the extent that the logistics of war have permitted). And it contains the promise of even more radical undertakings to come. Certainly, the popular identification with MPLA which *Poder Popular* facilitated has been one key to the military success of the new People's Republic.

Equally impressive, and quite important in present-day Angola, have been MPLA's efforts, once again rooted in its long history, to transcend tribalism and to forge a genuinely national polity. Again, this contrasts sharply with the activities of FNLA and UNITA. First and foremost the catspaws of outside interests, these movements (and especially UNITA in Ovimbundu areas) have managed to strike some indigenous roots by the demagogic manipulation of ethnic fears. Though this is a common enough tactic among the more opportunistic of petty bourgeois politicians in Africa, it is always difficult to know how deep the resultant kind of ethnic ideology and identification really cuts. What can be said with more confidence is that MPLA has begun working to redress this kind of negative "learning experience" in such areas, even as the war has begun to wind down. Particularly encouraging in this respect is the fact that MPLA has heretofore demonstrated, in Luanda and elsewhere, precisely the methods of political work which can be expected to overcome such difficulties and bring

all Angolans to a higher level of consciousness. But this is merely to repeat the same point from another angle: MPLA is a revolutionary movement, whereas its so-called rivals are not and never have been.

* * *

Such a judgment provides the proper touchstone for evaluating external involvement in Angola. The imperial linkages of FNLA and UNITA are patent, their domestic counter-revolutionary credentials impeccable. Yet Soviet arms and Cuban soldiers have also been important to MPLA's success. What is one to make of these realities? There will be some, of course, who have no difficulty here and who will see this merely as a laudable manifestation of proletarian internationalism and revolutionary solidarity. As noted, others, of right and left, will have greater misgivings about Soviet intentions. However, the crucial point is that whatever one's interpretations of these intentions, there is absolutely no reason to think that MPLA, having struggled for its freedom for 20 years, is about to deliver up that freedom again, even to its friends. As we have seen, the whole thrust of MPLA's development demonstrates the movement's autonomy and drive, as well as distinguishing it clearly from its rivals. In the words of Agostinho Neto, independent Angola's first President: "Just because the Soviet Union supplies us with weapons, it doesn't mean that we have become a satellite. We've never been one. We've never asked Moscow for advice on how to set up our state. All the major decisions in our country are taken by our movement, our government, and our people."

Moreover MPLA has over the years accepted concrete assistance from a wide range of sources in addition to the Eastern bloc—the World Council of Churches, the governments of the Scandinavian countries and Holland, Oxfam-Canada, SUCO, and the like—without feeling its autonomy or its policies to have been compromised; and it will probably continue to do so. Similarly, the movement has been firm about keeping the door open to China—not the normal practice for a "Soviet puppet," to say the least. Again, Neto's own words are worth quoting at length:

One must recognize that the People's Republic of China has played an important role in southern Africa in sustaining the liberation movements of many countries. However, China has erred in certain cases, perhaps for lack of a correct analysis. Thus we have seen China support reactionary secessions and coups d'état. Also in Angola, we see China supporting the reactionary forces created, armed, and financed by the Americans with the aim of impeding Africa's revolutionary path. Thus we see China at the side of the Americans fighting against the only forces of national liberation. We hope wholeheartedly that a new analysis of the situation will lead the Chinese to modify their attitude and to support the only progressive forces in Angola. But on our part there is no hostility with regard to China. On the contrary, we desire good relations. After independence, we are going to establish relations with the People's Republic of China.*

Here spoke the leader of a genuine national liberation struggle, radical and robustly independent—a leader and a movement fully deserving of its prize after 20 years of struggle against a cancerous colonialism and that colonialism's imperial allies.

Why have these realities been ignored in Canada? It is not difficult to understand the reasons for distortion on the part of media and politicians. How much more palatable is opposition to a process of profound social transformation if it can be packaged as resistance to Soviet or Cuban “aggression.” Just why some sections of the left should also play this game is more problematical. Perhaps this reveals, first and foremost, the tendency of a left, foiled of significant practice, to permit abstract formulas (“Marxism-Leninism” and the like) and

* Paulo Jorge, MPLA Responsible for External Affairs, made a similar remark when addressing a TCLSAC-sponsored meeting in Toronto in late October 1975. Asked about China's role, he stated: “We think the only people who can really explain this position are the Chinese themselves. As for MPLA we find it difficult—very difficult—to understand why a revolutionary government and a revolutionary people should supply arms to a movement like FNLA which in no way represents the aspirations of our people for a genuine independence.” Significantly, Jorge's public meeting was not well-attended by members of the Toronto left, many of whom seem to prefer the firm smack of theoretical principle to hard data; moreover, his press conference the next day was virtually ignored by members of the press, many of whom seem to prefer the comfortable certainties of American wire service reports to first-hand international news!

avored centers of revealed revolutionary truth to dictate thinking and strategizing, rather than to undertake the more arduous work of concrete analysis. Certainly, for anyone who has, like the present author, spent more than a decade analyzing the liberation struggles in southern Africa, the mushrooming of ill-informed instant expertise on the subject of Angola has been particularly distressing. But is it merely the exotic which has been so deformed? In fact, awareness of the difficulties of the Canadian left in dealing with Angola may help sharpen awareness of the extent to which a failure to concretize Marxism in Canada itself has also led to sloganeering and distortion in the discussion of Canadian political economy!

Whatever the case in this regard, it is clearly fortunate that the accumulating victories of MPLA have rendered the vicious distortions of that movement's position a matter of merely academic, not practical, concern. History seems to have left at the starting-gate those Canadian parliamentarians of all parties who piously and unanimously agreed, as late as February of this year, to call on "the three major Angolan political groups—the MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA—to desist from armed combat and proceed towards a mutually agreed upon peace settlement." So, too, those denizens of the Canadian left who were busy hosting a UNITA representative in Canada at about the same time.

Even "official Canada" now has been forced to keep pace with events. To be sure, for many months delegations requesting that Canada recognize the People's Republic of Angola met a stone wall in Ottawa, the government's refusal sometimes phrased in ironic counterpoint to its earlier and parallel refusal to recognize Guinea-Bissau for long months after that country's winning of independence. Then one of the Canadian government's primary arguments was that PAIGC did not hold the capital city, Bissau. In the Angola case, MPLA's holding of Luanda was seen as being unimportant. *Plus ça change*. . . . Similarly, Prime Minister Trudeau, far from using the opportunity of his Cuban visit to enlighten Canadian opinion about Angola, chose to further mystify it, the Canadian government adopting a position on the issue worthy of Henry Kissinger and tacitly accepting the latter's "threat to NATO," "red

menace," ignore South Africa, bluster. Nonetheless, by the end of February, Canada had followed other Western countries—though not yet the United States—in recognizing the People's Republic of Angola as that country's legitimate government.

That much seems settled. The fact remains that the continuing confusion over what really happened in Angola—the victory of the popular forces—has obscured the broader significance of the confrontation there. The reference here is to the overt involvement of South Africa in the Angolan struggle, its defeat by a combined MPLA-Cuban force, and the ramifications of this involvement and defeat. What is evident is that the question of South Africa itself has now been placed on the historical agenda more forcefully than at any previous time, and the myth of the white *laager's* invincibility tarnished, perhaps irrevocably. Revolutionary forces within South Africa can only be the beneficiaries.

Of course South Africa has used the opportunity of military action in "the North" to buttress itself in Namibia (see Roger Murray's article, "South Africa Grabs Opportunity to Bash SWAPO," *African Development*, January 1976). But internally, African advances in Mozambique already have had their impact, as the trial of the SASO Nine in Pretoria for last year's pro-FRELIMO demonstrations is currently demonstrating. Now not only have Vorster's catastrophic Angolan adventures thrown the South African white community off its stride, but they have also made a further contribution to growing black militancy, as seen, e.g., by the fourth annual Congress of the Black People's Convention, meeting amidst war hysteria in South Africa in December, which came out in direct support of MPLA. Internationally, the Republic's illegal hammerlock on Namibia must be even more open to question, and SWAPO will now have its Angolan base, as MPLA has promised. In addition the military situation in Zimbabwe has begun to heat up again, with African action resting this time on a much firmer foundation. And then there are the hopeful signs that the Soviet Union, having reaped propaganda gains in Africa from its assistance for MPLA, will seek similar gains by more effectively backing liberation groups elsewhere. Perhaps China too will have learned something from its disastrous

Angolan policies and begin again to play the positive role in supporting genuine popular forces in other southern African locales that it once did in Mozambique. In short, it is a heady time indeed in southern Africa.

THE EDITORS COMMENT

With respect to the issues discussed in the foregoing texts, we would wish to associate ourselves with the positions taken by John Saul. His historical analysis, while not specifically addressed to the arguments advanced by Clark Kissinger, nevertheless exposes their fallacious character.

For the rest, a few comments on the specific form these arguments take may be in order.

(1) In referring to "all three liberation movements" in Angola, Clark Kissinger shows either an inability or unwillingness to deal with the facts of recent African history. Whatever may have been the case in the early sixties (a subject adequately covered by Azinna Nwafor in his February MR piece), there cannot be the slightest doubt that during the last ten years or so, and most emphatically since the collapse of Portugal's African empire, the MPLA has been the only genuine liberation movement in Angola.

(2) Certain implicit assumptions underlying Kissinger's position appear to be revealed in his fourth paragraph, where he speaks of "a mad scramble between the two superpowers to pick up the pieces [of the Portuguese empire] from the Canary Islands to Timor." Any serious radical should know, and should miss no opportunity to stress, that the Portuguese empire did not consist of "pieces" to be picked up by anyone, but of oppressed peoples struggling for liberation and deserving the whole-hearted support of progressive people everywhere. To treat them as mere objects of superpower rivalry and maneuvering simply will not do.

(3) To pin the label "colonial troops" on the Cubans who fought alongside the MPLA, and at the latter's urgent request, against aggression and invasion by the forces of imperialism and South African racism is a gratuitous insult not only to the Cubans themselves but also to the intelligence of anyone who is familiar with the nature and history of colonialism and im-

perialism in the modern world. The Cubans made their own revolution without any help from the Soviet Union, and it was the culmination of a hundred-year, often-armed struggle against Spanish colonialism and U.S. imperialism. After the revolution and under the impact of U.S. economic blockade and the constant threat of U.S. military intervention, the Cubans accepted extensive Soviet economic and military aid. This undoubtedly meant a high degree of Cuban dependence on the USSR, which the Cubans have paid back in large part by supporting the Soviet position in world affairs. But at the same time the Cubans have conducted a distinctive foreign policy of their own, cultivating close relations with the Vietnamese and North Koreans and lending active support to revolutionary movements in Latin America and Africa. In the light of the factual record, it would be entirely logical to suppose that military aid to the MPLA was at least as much a Cuban as a Soviet idea. One may believe, as indeed we do, that the relationship of dependence on the USSR entails grave long-run dangers to Cuba—the same could be said of the dependent relationship between Western Europe and the United States in the post-Second World War period—but this is an entirely different thing from saying that Cuba is a colony of the Soviet Union. Such glib formulas belong to the realm of cheap polemics, not of serious analysis and debate.

(4) The reasoning of Kissinger's conclusion strikes us as most peculiar. The Soviet Union, he says, wants to redivide the world, and the United States to preserve the status quo. In these circumstances the United States supports existing regimes, while the USSR "takes advantage of popular struggles for independence to gain a foothold and weaken its imperial adversary." So far so good. But what are the implications for revolutionaries and progressives around the world? Kissinger's prescription is that "it is most necessary to grasp the class character of the Russian state." Having grasped it, what does one do? There are, it would seem, only two possibilities: either help the United States preserve the status quo as a way of preventing the Russians from making further gains, or outdo the Russians in supporting popular struggles for independence (from both the United States and the Soviet Union). The notion that

there is a third possibility—to stand aloof and proclaim “a plague on both your houses”—is of course untenable: objectively this stance is bound to favor one or the other of the contending imperial powers. As between these two alternatives, the whole tenor of Kissinger’s argument seems definitely weighted on the side of supporting the status quo.

In conclusion, a word about China’s role in Angola. The best judges of it are certainly not Americans, or Russians, or Chinese either for that matter. The best judges are African revolutionaries, and especially the comrades from Mozambique and Angola itself who have been fighting, arms in hand, against Portuguese colonialism backed by American and European imperialism for a full decade and a half. Their view is stated concisely and eloquently in the passage which John Saul quotes from Agostinho Neto on page 12 above: “China has erred in certain cases, perhaps for lack of a correct analysis. Thus we have seen China support reactionary secessions and coups d’état. Also in Angola, we see China supporting the reactionary forces created, armed, and financed by the Americans with the aim of impeding Africa’s revolutionary path. Thus we see China at the side of the Americans fighting against the only forces of national liberation.” This is indeed severe criticism, but it does not lead the head of the MPLA and now the president of the People’s Republic of Angola to denounce China. On the contrary: “We hope wholeheartedly that a new analysis of the situation will lead the Chinese to modify their attitude and to support the only progressive forces in Angola. But on our part there is no hostility with regard to China. On the contrary, we desire good relations. . . .”

This seems to us an exemplary attitude, one which should be adopted as their own by revolutionaries and progressives everywhere. China’s enormous, in fact unprecedented and unequalled, contributions to world revolution entitle the People’s Republic to our unbounded admiration and respect. They do not, however, exempt China from searching analysis and criticism. To assume otherwise would be to repudiate one of the most basic and important principles of Marxism.

(April 10, 1976)

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VIETNAM IN THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON: Reunification, Reunion, and Socialist Reconstruction

BY TRAN VAN DINH

Our Fatherland will surely be reunified. Our compatriots in the South and in the North will surely be reunited into one single family.

Ho Chi Minh Testament, May 10, 1969

On September 3rd, 1969, fifteen weeks after he wrote his Last Will, President Ho Chi Minh departed from his beloved Vietnam "to meet the Honorables Marx, Lenin, and other elder revolutionaries." Had he lived until May 1st of the Year of the Dragon (1976) he would have seen fulfilled one of the dearest dreams of his life, one of the most important objectives of the revolution he had led for half a century: *Thong Nhat* or the Reunification of Vietnam.

Yet the reunification question was not always correctly understood in this country during the antiwar movement of the 1960s. To oppose the U.S. aggression in Vietnam, some took the position that Vietnam was a country "torn by civil war" and that the National Liberation Front (NLF) of South Vietnam was leading a separate revolution, independent of the

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North. To correct this erroneous assessment, I wrote in 1966 an article entitled "Reunification is the Key to Peace in Vietnam." (*War and Peace Report*, December 1966) I still believe what I did then.

The position of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) was also clear on this issue. On the 150th birthday of Karl Marx (May 5, 1968), Truong Chinh, a member of the Politburo of the Vietnam Lao Dong (Workers) Party, chairman of the standing committee of the DRV's National Assembly, delivered an important speech entitled: "Let us pledge undying gratitude to Karl Marx and unswerving adherence to his line," at a meeting of cadres convened to commemorate the event in Hanoi. He declared:

The Vietnamese people are one nation, Vietnam is one country. Wherever on the Vietnamese territory there are foreign aggressors, the Vietnamese must fight shoulder to shoulder to drive them out. To join forces for the liberation of the South, the defense of the North, and the ultimate peaceful reunification of the fatherland is the sacred duty of the thirty-one million Vietnamese in both parts of this country. No one has the right to prevent the Vietnamese people from fulfilling it, the U.S. imperialists—the aggressors—least of all.

To understand the importance of reunification in the context of Vietnamese history, it is necessary to go back to the tenth century when, liberated from a thousand-year Chinese hegemony, Vietnam organized itself into a centralized state, spreading from the Chinese border at the Nam Quang Gate, southward to about the 20th parallel. The new independent monarchy, with its capital at Thang Long (Ascending Dragon, now Hanoi), started the Nam Tien (March to the South) which lasted until the late eighteenth century.* This longest march in the history of any nation was motivated by demographic pressure and was, according to historian Le Thanh Khoi, "essentially a conquest of new lands by an agricultural people who found in front of themselves a population of seminomadic hunters and seafarers." It was at first a peaceful pene-

* For a map of the formation of Vietnam, see Helen B. Lamb, *Vietnam's Will to Live* (Monthly Review Press, 1972), p. 333.

tration into the abandoned fields and jungles of the southern kingdom of Champa by Vietnamese colonizing farmers who brought along with them a higher agricultural technique and especially a more sophisticated social organization: the Lang (village). The Vietnamese village, as the late Helen B. Lamb has described it, was:

far more than a collection of families or an administrative unit. It was a commune, a corporate whole which held the individual families tightly within it. Unlike the typical village in China and other parts of Southeast Asia, the Vietnamese commune collectively held a significant proportion of the total village acreage in communal land—the *cong dien*—to be tilled in rotation by various families. (*Vietnam's Will to Live*, p. 17)

But soon that pacific move met with violent reactions from Champa, whose armies most of the time had to retreat before the well-organized Vietnamese peasants backed by the disciplined Vietnamese soldiers.

The acquisition of new territories was not always done by peaceful penetration or combined peasant-soldier military operations. It was also accomplished by diplomacy and marriages. In 1307, the King of Champa, Jaya Simhavarman, offered the districts of O and Ly (between the 17th and 16th parallels, around the former imperial capital of Hue) in exchange for the hand of Princess Huyen Tran, sister of King Anh Tong. This political alliance met with strong opposition from Vietnamese intellectuals, who wrote angry petitions and composed poems of protest.

The March to the South slowed down around 1600, when, as a result of a feud between two powerful clans (the Nguyen and the Trinh) at the court of the reigning Le dynasty, the Nguyen was forced to go South, to the 17th parallel. There the Nguyen established its own power base. It was not however a formal division of the country, as most Western and even Vietnamese historians seem to believe, for the reason that both the Nguyen in the South and the Trinh in the North recognized the central, legal authority of the Le in Thang Long (Hanoi). Once their power had been consolidated south of the 17th parallel, the Nguyen lords continued the March to the South. By 1674 Saigon was part of Vietnam. The March ended

in 1780 with the whole Camau peninsula under the jurisdiction of Vietnam. Indeed, Vietnam was not a gift from nature but a conquest by the Vietnamese, who have shed so much blood in so many wars (mainly against Champa, Cambodia, and Thailand) and in so many internal conflicts. One can say that, until the French colonization (begun in 1858 and formalized by the treaty of 1884), Vietnam had been one country.

The French divided Vietnam into three parts: Bac Ky (or Tonkin, the northern division), a "protectorate"; Trung Ky or (Annam, the central division), a semi-autonomous "protectorate" with a powerless Vietnamese Emperor and his court at Hue; and Nam Ky (or Cochinchina, the southern division), a colony. Of course all these three Ky (divisions) were equally and ruthlessly exploited by the French authorities.

On September 2, 1945, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) was born from the victorious August 1945 revolution led by the Viet Minh League, a united front organized by Ho Chi Minh and his Indochinese Communist Party (now the Lao Dong, or Workers Party). With the cooperation of their allies, the British and the Chinese Kuomintang, the French attempted to reimpose their domination over Vietnam. To gain time and to show the Vietnamese desire for accommodation, President Ho Chi Minh signed the March 6, 1946, Convention. Under that agreement and "concerning the unification of the three Ky (Tonkin, Annam, Cochinchina) the French government [bound] itself to carry out the decisions taken by the population through a referendum." The French knew that such a referendum could only result in the reunification of Vietnam. They were aware that all Vietnamese would concur with President Ho Chi Minh when he told them on May 31, 1946, before he went to France for diplomatic talks, that "our compatriots in Nam Bo [southern part] are citizens of Vietnam" and that "rivers may dry up, mountains may erode, but this deep truth will remain forever unchanged." While in Paris, he reiterated his position: "Cochinchina is a Vietnamese land. It is the flesh of our flesh, the blood of our blood. Before Corsica became French, Cochinchina was already Vietnamese."

But the French government was determined to divide and rule Vietnam. While negotiations continued, and when new

agreements were about to be signed, the French representative in Cochinchina set up (on March 26, 1946) a provincial government of the republic of Cochinchina, headed by Dr. Nguyen Van Thinh. Less than eight months later, Dr. Thinh, an honest but misguided physician, committed suicide, convinced "of the necessity to put an end to the separatist impasse." Despite this tragic failure, the French separatist policy went on. Earlier, in April-May 1946, at the preliminary conference in Dalat, Vo Nguyen Giap (presently Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Commander in Chief of DRV's Vietnam People's Army) on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation declared: "If ever Nam Bo is separated from the rest of the country, the Vietnamese people will devote their energies to struggling for its return to the reunified Vietnam." It took Giap's armies and the Vietnamese masses 30 years of a hard and bloody struggle against two of the most technologically advanced armies in the world, the French and the American, to secure the return of Nam Bo to a reunified Vietnam.

During the First Indochina War (1946-1954), the French, recognizing the growing popularity of the Vietminh and the need to satisfy even on paper the demands of Vietnamese nationalism, accepted the principle of Vietnamese territorial integrity. The March 1949 Elysée Agreement signed with ex-Emperor Bao Dai acknowledged that "notwithstanding former treaties of which she might have availed herself, France formally reaffirms her decision not to raise *de jure* or *de facto* obstacles to the admission of Cochinchina within the framework of Vietnam defined as constituted by the unity of the territories of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina." It was too late. The First Indochina War ended with the Vietnamese victory at Dien Bien Phu and the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements which partitioned Vietnam temporarily at the 17th parallel, but proclaimed that "the military demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary." Both "zones," until elections for reunification to be held in 1956, had governments of their own. In both, the fundamental laws assert the principle of Vietnam's territorial integrity. Provisions of the two Constitutions (North and South) on this particular point are practically interchange-

able. Article 2 of the 1946 Constitution of the DRV (Hanoi) stated: "The territory of Vietnam, composed of Bac Bo or Northern Vietnam, Trung Bo or Central Vietnam, and Nam Bo or Southern Vietnam is one and indivisible." The revised 1960 DRV Constitution says (Article 1): "The territory of Vietnam is a single, indivisible whole from North to South." Likewise, Article 1 of the 1956 Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam (South) declared: "Vietnam is an independent, unified, territorially indivisible republic." The same affirmation is repeated and even reinforced in the 1967 Constitution (South) by Article 107 which says that "Article 1 cannot be nullified or modified."

Despite all these constitutional guarantees, despite numerous attempts by Hanoi to engage Saigon in holding elections for reunification as stipulated in the 1954 Geneva Agreements, 1956 passed without elections and with a country still divided. Not totally abandoning the hope for elections, Hanoi began to reassess its position and emphasized that "the struggle for peaceful reunification would be far longer and more arduous than anticipated at Geneva." In a message dated June 19, 1956, to the Southern cadres regrouped in the North, President Ho Chi Minh undertook to explain the shift in priorities that the situation dictated:

Our policy is: to consolidate the North and to keep in mind the South. To build a good house we must build a good foundation. The North is the foundation, the root of the struggle for complete national liberation and the reunification of the country. That is why everything we are doing in the North is aimed at strengthening both the North and the South. Therefore, to work here is the same as struggling in the South, to struggle for the South and the whole of Vietnam.

The United States supported Saigon's violations of the basic clauses of the 1954 Geneva Agreements. All U.S. presidents then and later—Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford—referred to South Vietnam as an "independent country." For example, President Johnson, in his speech at Johns Hopkins University on April 7, 1965, asserted: "The first reality is that North Vietnam has attacked the independent nation of South Vietnam," and declared that the U.S. objective

is the "independence of South Vietnam and its freedom from attacks." Even after the signing of the 1973 Paris Agreements which stipulates in its Article 1 that "the United States and all other countries respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity as recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam," President Nixon, in his radio and television address on January 23, 1973, announced: "The United States [will] continue to recognize the government of the Republic of Vietnam as the sole legitimate government of South Vietnam." This was to be expected. As we now know through the Pentagon Papers and other revelations, the U.S. politico-military intervention in Vietnam was rooted in its imperialist policy and its attempt, in the words of the editors of MR (November 1966), to build "an independent South Vietnam which was supposed to be the center from which American power and influence would radiate through the whole region." The history of the two Indochina wars proved to all Vietnamese beyond any doubt that territorial division of Vietnam was part and parcel of foreign aggressions.

On December 20, 1960, the National Liberation Front (NLF) of South Vietnam was formed as a mass organization to "rally all the patriotic classes and sections of the people, all patriotic parties and religious groupings, together with all individuals inclined to oppose the U.S. and Diem." Point 9 of its 10-point program states:

The urgent demand of our people throughout the country is to reunify the fatherland by peaceful means. The South Vietnam National Liberation Front undertakes the gradual reunification of the country by peaceful means, on the principle of negotiations and discussions between the two zones on all forms and measures beneficial to the Vietnamese people and fatherland.

In the spring of 1975, two years after the signing of the 1973 Paris Agreements, when it was all too clear that the United States had rejected an opportunity to bring about a ceasefire and a political settlement on terms to which the Communist leaders were willing to agree for their own reasons in 1973, the DRV and the PRG (Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam) decided not to allow the situa-

tion of 1956 to repeat itself. After making "a correct appraisal of the correlation of forces between ourselves and the enemy," as Generals Vo Nguyen Giap and Van Tien Dung explained later, they launched the Ho Chi Minh Campaign, a "daring, determined and well-timed offensive to achieve victory within the shortest possible time." In a matter of days, the Ho Chi Minh Campaign drove Nguyen Van Thieu to the island of Taiwan, some of his principal aides to the suburbs of Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin to rest and recuperation in Italy. On April 30, 1975, the liberation armies entered Saigon, immediately renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

This lengthy review of the history of reunification is to respond to the concern of those who seem to be surprised and even disappointed by the quick pace of Vietnam's postwar reunification process, and also to end idle speculations of those who wish Vietnam to be a federation of regions in the Yugoslav style.

Since May 1, 1975, the most visible slogan in Vietnam has been: "Vietnam is one, the Vietnamese are one." Clearly, the authorities in both zones were preparing the public for the Political Consultative Conference for the Reunification of the Fatherland which was held in Ho Chi Minh City from November 15 to November 21, 1975. The Chairman of the Conference was lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho, president of the PRG's Advisory Council. The leader of the Northern delegation (25 members) was Truong Chinh, member of the Politburo of the Lao Dong party and its well-known theoretician. The head of the Southern delegation (25 members) was Pham Hung, also a member of the Politburo of the Lao Dong, secretary of the party's Southern Committee, and its representative in the NLF. The Conference agreed on the following main points:

- (1) General elections will be held on April 25, 1976, to choose a National Assembly for the whole country, with one representative for 100,000 voters. This means that there will be 248 Assembly members from the North and 240 from the South. The National Assembly will vote for a new government and write a new constitution for reunified Vietnam.

- (2) An "elections commission" composed of an equal number of members from both zones will organize and supervise the elections. Voting age is 18, candidate age 21.

Thus as of May 1st, 1976, Vietnam is once again, *de facto* and *de jure*, one single country. In the meantime, beginning April 30, 1975, communications between the two zones were re-established after 30 years. To stabilize the situation in the South, the North has been sending material and personnel aid to the South.*

While the territorial and administrative reunification of Vietnam presents no major difficulties, the reunion of 45 million Vietnamese "into one single family" and the construction of socialism for the whole country will not be an easy or simple matter. The tasks which will lie ahead were defined by Truong Chinh at the November 1975 Reunification Conference: "To achieve reunification is to complete unification of the political and social regimes of both zones, in particular the economic and social infrastructures, the relationship of production, the class structure. . . ."

Pham Hung, the leader of the Southern delegation to the same conference cautioned: "Not all problems will be immediately solved once the reunification is achieved. The revolutionary tasks ahead demand that all cadres and all people must have new determination and make new efforts."

The difficulties arising from both superstructures and economic bases were analyzed in *Hoc Tap* (Studies), a theoretical monthly published in Hanoi, in December 1975:

In the South, there are at present facets which are unlike

* Among the most moving examples of the North's aid to the South was the sending of buffaloes by organizations and individuals to farmers in the South. For example: 4,000 buffaloes have been dispatched by the Central Agricultural Office in the DRV to provinces in central Vietnam. Farmers in the northern province of Bac Thai sent 500 buffaloes to their compatriots in the provinces of Khanh Hoa, Kontoum in the South. One can value the significance of these gestures if one knows the deep affection and the close companionship Vietnamese peasants have for their animals of labor. See: *Doan Ket* (Unity), a Vietnamese weekly published by the Association of Vietnamese in France, no. 181, January 1, 1976.

those in the North. While 20 years have elapsed since the North embarked on socialist revolution and construction, the South is now entering the stage of transition to socialism. During the last 20 years, South Vietnam's economy developed under special circumstances and under the condition of serving the U.S. war of aggression and neocolonialism. It was an economy completely dependent on foreign countries. U.S. imperialism created in South Vietnam a comprador capitalist bourgeoisie which held in its hand most of the important bases of production, circulation, and distribution, which colluded with the ruling militarists, and which enriched itself in the war and lived on the blood and bones of our compatriots. The political and social situation in the South is still complex. The class struggle in the South is still fierce. The main direction is to co-ordinate reform closely with construction throughout the entire process of socialist revolution. For a certain period of time, there will be many economic elements in South Vietnam—socialist state-operated economy, socialist collective economy, semi-socialist joint state-private economy, individual economy, and capitalist privately operated economy. We must strive to make use of all capabilities in labor, technique, capital, and managerial experience to step up production. The socialist reform of privately operated capitalist industry and trade, agriculture, handicraft and small industry will be carried out step by step. The process of agricultural collectivization in South Vietnam must be closely coordinated with the process of water conservancy, mechanization, technical equipment, using new seeds, reorganizing and redistributing labor, carrying out special cultivation and intensive cultivation and raising labor productivity on the basis of production guidelines which have been laid down.

Taking into account these difficulties and differences, the North

however should not stop and wait for the South. It must progress forward in its task of socialist revolution and the construction of socialism to provide more favorable conditions for the South to stretch up and to catch up with the North. The South does not need to complete all the tasks of national democratic revolution to embark upon socialist revolution. It must seize all favorable circumstances and learn all the experiences of the construction in the North, moving quickly to new tasks in a new phase.

In recognizing the apparent and basic differences described above, one should not forget two other important aspects:

- (1) The general acceptance of socialism as "an ideology

for progress.”* The final communiqué of the November 1975 Reunification Conference made it clear that “independence, reunification, and socialism closely connect with one another. Socialism is the forward direction and the popular trend of the Vietnamese society, the unique way for Vietnam to preserve its independence and unity.” The fact that the leaders of both zones at the conference, Truong Chinh and Pham Hung, were veteran Communists and Lao Dong Politburo members speaks loudly for this point. Moreover, since the foundation of the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) in 1930, socialism has gradually and firmly become part of the national consciousness, especially among workers, peasants, and intellectuals. The U.S. massive attacks have in one way destroyed the social fabric of the country, but in another way have exposed to the masses the brutality and barbarity of capitalism and imperialism. The indiscriminate and deliberate U.S. bombings (as part of the forced urbanization program) drove millions to the cities and refugee camps, but there existed “liberated areas” in South Vietnam which have undergone socialist transformation as well.

(2) The not-yet fully appreciated and evaluated effects of the U.S. “presence” in the South since 1954, especially during the period 1965-1975. To have an idea of this problem, let us look at some statistics: in the February 2nd, 1970, issue of the *New York Times*, the American anthropologist Gerald Hickey was quoted as saying: “Just 15 years ago, all but 15 percent of the South Vietnamese lived in rural areas. Now 60 percent live in urban areas. Saigon has grown from a city of 300,000 as designed to a city of more than 3 million.” Once called the “Paris of the Orient,” it has become one of the worst and most congested cities in the world, with an average of 140 persons per acre (Tokyo: 63), running as high as 830 in the ghettos. The forced urbanization naturally created unemployment. On February 25, 1974, *Hoa Binh* (Peace), a Catholic daily, quoted Saigon Deputy Premier Dr. Phan Quang Dan,

* Nguyen Khac Vien, *Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam* (Washington: Indochina Resource Center, 1974), p. 132. See my review in MR, October 1975.

director of the refugee program (he is now a rich refugee in the affluent Washington suburb of Arlington, Virginia), as having admitted that "there were from three to four million unemployed persons in the areas controlled by Saigon." Added to this were: the huge Saigon army of 1.1 million men, a vast bureaucracy of over 100,000, a police force of over 200,000, all of which have been disbanded and re-educated since the liberation. One can easily see the magnitude of the problems being faced by the PRG and now by the new government. Since May 1975 and up to January 1976, a substantial number of the urban population, 350,000 of them, have returned to the land and more than 120,000 have settled in new "economic zones."

But the resettlement has been slow because of unexploded munitions. In a study entitled: "The Unexploded Munitions Problem: An American Legacy to Indochina That Still Wounds and Kills," Professor Arthur W. Westing, who has traveled extensively in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia to observe the effects of the war on environment, under the auspices of American scientific organizations, wrote:

The Vietnam War was a conflict in which we expended greater quantities of munitions than in any past war in our 200-year history, perhaps more than in all of them combined. During the course of a decade we directed more than 20 million bombs and an additional 230 million artillery shells against the land and people we were trying to subdue. The fields and paddies of Indochina are pocked with seemingly endless numbers of deep craters. These must be laboriously filled in, almost always by hand, at an estimated expenditure of up to 500 man-hours per crater. But sadly enough, during these efforts at agricultural reconstruction, the local dying and maiming continue. These result from the little appreciated aftermath of bombing and shelling: the delaying detonation of the residual duds that lie hidden just beneath the surface of the land. (*Herald Times Argus*, Rutland, Vermont, December 1975)

In another article, "Environmental Consequences of the Second Indochina War: A Case Study," Westing described the means by which the United States "attempted to defeat its guerrilla enemy: (1) forest destruction (primarily to deny the enemy freedom of movement, staging areas, and cover in general); (2) crop destruction (primarily to deny the enemy local

sources of food); (3) forced relocation of indigenous civilians into the U.S.-controlled areas (primarily to deny the enemy logistical and other support)." He then noted the "employment and consequences of high-explosive munitions (bombs and shells), chemical anti-plant agents (herbicides), and heavy land-clearing tractors," and concluded:

Among the ecological lessons to be learned from the military tactics employed by the U.S. in South Vietnam during the Second Indochina War are: (1) that the vegetation can be severely damaged or even destroyed with relative ease over extensive areas—and of course with it, the ecosystems for which it provides the basis, (2) that natural, agricultural, and industrial crop plant communities are all similarly vulnerable, and (3) that the ecological impact of such actions is likely to be of long duration. (*Ambio* magazine, vol. 4, nos. 5-6)

Obviously, the rebuilding of war-ravaged Vietnam and the construction of socialism can be accomplished only by the efforts of the entire nation of 45 million Vietnamese. More than ever, the famed wartime slogan of Ho Chi Minh—"Unity, unity, greater unity, accomplishment, accomplishment, greater accomplishment"—is relevant. This and the inherent nature of socialism itself have converted South Vietnam since liberation into an educational center, a school for re-education. A French correspondent wrote, on the basis of his own observation:

The regime is seeking to build in the South its "new society" which is not limited to purely technical measures. Re-education is used as an instrument of political, social, and professional formation. Former officers and officials are re-educated in camps where they learn the rudiments of Marxism-Leninism and the living conditions of their enemies of yesterday. Re-education also takes place on the spot. In groups of a dozen families, in urban districts or villages, officials lecture the population on all sorts of subjects, from the coming reunification of the country to everyday activities. Similar programs also take place in the workshops and factories. (*New York Times*, February 8, 1976)

One cannot but be impressed, even moved, by seeing in *Time* magazine of February 16, 1976, pictures of former Saigon generals attending lectures conducted by a youthful cadre, or a former Saigon defense minister discarding pieces of rotten vegetables in the garden of his re-education center. Instead of

the "bloodbath" expected by practically all Western writers and politicians, one can now see, as the DRV's Premier Pham Van Dong said recently, "a bath of fraternity and generosity." To be sure, there are still counter-revolutionary elements left behind, CIA agents who refuse to submit themselves to re-education, who use religious labels (in particular Roman Catholic ones) to create disorder. The incident of February 12, 1976, is a case in point. On that day, a group of armed rebels took over a Catholic church and resisted appeals for surrender. In the ensuing fight, one member of Ho Chi Minh City's security forces was killed, two rebels were shot to death, and five, including a priest, were arrested. Similar incidents may take place in the future, but they cannot affect the Vietnamese march to socialism. The PRG itself felt confident enough to have the military committee that administered Ho Chi Minh City for nine months replaced by civil administration on January 21st, 1976.

After the liberation of South Vietnam, in May 1975, a friend and colleague of mine, then living in Europe, wrote me to express his joy at the victory of the Vietnamese liberation armies. He added that he however "felt rather sad that from now on, the Third World will miss the rich experience the Vietnamese have given us." My friend should know that armed resistance is only a phase of the war of national liberation, the fundamental aim of which is to liberate the masses from exploitation and oppression and to create a more just and humane society. If during the two Indochina wars the Vietnamese people have brought out "new truths," verified old theories, and developed relevant practices, in the present stage of reunification, reunion, and socialist reconstruction, they will search for better ideas, better strategies and tactics for transforming a divided country subjected to the most barbaric war of aggression, a former colonial and neocolonial nation, into a socialist state. This is also to say that while the Vietnamese military resistance has enlisted the immense support of progressive peoples everywhere, including the American people, the socialist reconstruction of Vietnam should inspire an even stronger and more resilient international solidarity.

As a Vietnamese, I am fully aware of the difficulties of the socialist construction in my homeland. But I am convinced that

it can be done and will be done, if for no other reason than the traditional revolutionary optimism of the Vietnamese masses. During the First Indochina War, the desolation of my home town, Hue, moved a poet to sigh:

There is not even one tree left on the Imperial Hill,
The lonely bird sleeps on the bare and cold earth,
There is not one passenger in the pleasure sampan on the
River of Perfume,
The songstress cries at the empty sky.*

This note of pessimism and despair was quickly answered by a *ca-dao* (folk song), a creation of the laboring class:

Here is the River, there is the Mountain,
they are still the same.
Our land is as beautiful as brocade,
why then worry, my love?
Right now, we are going to rebuild our future
to provide a tree for the bird and a sampan
for you to cross the River.

* The Imperial Hill (Nui Ngu) and the River of Perfume (Song Huong) are Hue's outstanding landmarks.

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IN MEMORIAM: OLIVER C. COX, 1901-1974

BY GORDON D. MORGAN

Oliver Cromwell Cox was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, on August 25, 1901. At eighteen he came to the United States to work and complete his education, originally intending to follow the path of his elder brother and become a physician. Later, however, he changed his plans. After graduating from the YMCA High School in Chicago, he studied law and was awarded a degree from Northwestern University in 1928. He went on to the University of Chicago, where he received both an M.A. in economics (1932) and a Ph.D. in sociology (1938).

Cox's characteristic independence of thought was evident even in his years as a graduate student at Chicago. Although a contemporary of such scholars as St. Clair Drake, Horace Cayton, E. Franklin Frazier, and Charles S. Johnson, all of whom found places in the sociological sun with their studies of American race relations, Cox was never close to them theoretically or ideologically. He was highly critical of the hypotheses on race relations advanced by Robert E. Park of the University of Chicago, who was a major influence on other black sociologists of Cox's generation. Many of these scholars got their first chance to establish themselves by contributing to the research on Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma*.

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But Cox, from the very start, disagreed with the conceptual formulation underlying *An American Dilemma*, denying that the crux of the American racial problem—as suggested by Myrdal and seconded by the black scholars of the Chicago School—lay within the context of caste. He went so far as to criticize Drake, Cayton, and Frazier for selling out to Myrdal. Thus, while these scholars gained favor with the sociological establishment, Cox remained essentially an outsider, working on his own with little ideological or theoretical support from his peers.

Cox respected his contemporaries—especially Frazier, Du-Bois, Drake, and Cayton—but he thought they approached the question of race relations mainly as information-gatherers, shunning opportunities to make theoretical advances. He often suggested that they were influenced by the need to make their work acceptable to the foundations which supported their research. In his earlier years, Cox was never awarded any financial support from any foundation for the pursuit of his research, while grants were often given Frazier and others who worked within approved theoretical frameworks.

This matter of research support for black sociologists continued to be a sore spot between Cox and other scholars from the time of *An American Dilemma*. Probably that breach was never fully healed; as a result, Cox was practically barred from the fraternity of “promising” black sociologists of the first generation. When white scholars mentioned him, it was only to identify him as a “Marxist,” not to deal seriously with his theories. Nor were young black scholars encouraged to read Cox; when his name came up, sociologists of his own generation would caution: “Cox, you know his problem. He’s a Marxist and it would be safer not to be identified with him.”

In fact, Cox was wrongly labeled a Marxist. He maintained to the end of his life that he was not a Marxist, that he had no disposition toward one political ideology or another. Nevertheless, the majority of writers on American race relations continued to cite *Caste, Class and Race*—his major and perhaps most controversial work—as evidence of his “Marxist” interpretations of race.

Caste, Class and Race (1948) may be regarded as the first major attempt to refute Myrdal and the "caste school" of race relations.* Race relations, Cox argued in this book, cannot be reduced merely to the facts of prejudice, bigotry, and the mistreatment of one group by another; rather, they must be viewed as an inherent part of the capitalist system. His research found no evidence of race relations in non-European countries prior to the fifteenth century: they began essentially with Columbus—with the expansion of Europe—and developed primarily in those countries which were heavily grounded in capitalism. Christianity, capitalism, and racism, Cox asserted, are always found together.

Cox was a prolific writer. Aside from *Caste, Class and Race*, he authored a tremendous three-volume work, *The foundations of Capitalism* (1959), *Capitalism and American Leadership* (1962), and *Capitalism as a System* (1964).** His primary orientation was toward a historical comparative method of research; his favorite haunt was the Library of Congress (where he had parking privileges and his own cubicle). He did not disdain the radical empirical approach to sociology, but was not much impressed with analyses which, despite their methodological sophistication, failed to address major societal issues.

Because of Cox's opposition to the use of caste and psychology as explanations of race relations, other scholars tried to avoid him. They could not ignore him entirely, but he was overlooked by the major sociological associations, and what recognition he received was principally in the form of severe criticism. As far as his teaching career was concerned, Cox found that black schools, like black scholars, were not particularly receptive to his sociological philosophy. He taught for several years at Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, and for a while at Tuskegee, before joining the staff of Lincoln Uni-

* *Caste, Class and Race* was originally published by Doubleday, but when the first edition was exhausted it was allowed to go out of print. In 1959 Monthly Review Press reprinted the book in hardcover, and in 1970 brought out a paperback edition. The book has sold steadily and (considering its length and scholarly format) well over the years.—THE EDITORS

** All three titles are now out of print.

versity in Jefferson City, Missouri. His last position, at the time of his death, was at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

This lack of public recognition did not seem to disturb Cox. In fact, he tended to shun the academic limelight by choice, keeping in touch largely through reading and contributing to journals. Occasionally he did attend national and regional meetings of sociological associations; he loved to debate, and few students or colleagues could come into contact with him without being struck by the breadth of his knowledge and the clarity of his logic. A highlight of a 1967 meeting of the Missouri Sociological-Anthropological Association in Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, was an informal debate on capitalism, ending in a stand-off between Cox and the loquacious Alvin Gouldner.

Cox knew that his brand of sociology was consistent with what younger radical scholars wanted to hear, but he would not become identified with radical sociological groups. He received many letters urging him to become more active in radical sociology; in his answers, brief but gracious, he always declined.

In his personal life, too, Cox was a loner. Stricken by polio in 1929 while still a student, he was prematurely disabled in both legs, unable to walk without crutches. Thus he spent much of his time outside of classes in the college dormitories, where he usually had lodgings. He had to have his meals brought to him; on weekends and during holidays, when the school dining halls were closed, he would prepare light soups for himself, on a hot plate he kept in his room. He did not seem to be very close to his natural family; they seldom visited. He practically never went to church, nor did he become seriously involved with any civic or fraternal groups. He may have been a member of Alphi Phi Alpha fraternity, but he was never active in it.

And yet Cox was a deeply religious and sensitive man. He appreciated classical music and was himself an artist—a lifelong painter, some of whose pictures are displayed at Wiley College, where he taught for a time. Perhaps his sensitivity was most apparent in his relationship with students. Cox was not a

"popular" professor who attracted a large student following. His students tended to be somewhat wary of him, possibly because they knew he had "done his homework" and had a thorough grasp of his subject matter. Yet there were also students who found him exciting. He almost always could see logic in the student viewpoint. It was a delight to go to his room, where the talk ranged from academics to a broad appreciation of the people and problems of the world. And perhaps the highest tribute to be paid to Cox is that many students gained respect for him and realized the importance of his teaching only *after* they were out of school.

It is ironic that Oliver C. Cox, perhaps the soundest thinker of the first generation of black sociologists, was accorded only negative recognition during most of his long academic career. As a premier scholar in the field of race relations and capitalism, he probably had more impact than any of his contemporaries upon a sizable group of younger sociologists, black and white, who are working today on the study of these institutions.

The death of E. Franklin Frazier in 1962 left a void in black sociology, for Frazier was recognized by the general sociological fraternity as the dean of black sociologists. There seemed to be no worthy successor on the horizon: Cox, despite his continuing activity, was overlooked. Yet even those who would have preferred to shunt Cox aside were forced, albeit grudgingly, to acknowledge the cogency of his analyses. In 1968, Cox received some belated recognition of his efforts when the Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists presented him with the DuBois Award for his contributions to sociology.

With the passing of Oliver Cox, it may be some time before we will encounter a black sociologist with a comparable impact on the field. It will be difficult for anyone to match his theoretical insight, his controversiality, his sheer productivity. Cox will be sorely missed within the sociological fraternity, yet his ideas will endure—as propositions to be understood, debated, and tested—for years to come.

I consider myself very fortunate to have worked for four years, 1965-1969, with one of the greatest sociology teachers of modern times; a man who cherished scholarship, who loved

humanity, and who, while controversial, was respected by all who came under his influence.

* * *

The following bibliography of Oliver Cox's works was prepared by Hubert Ross, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia.

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(Cox wrote numerous book reviews in such periodicals as the *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Science and Society*, *Journal of Negro Education*, etc.)

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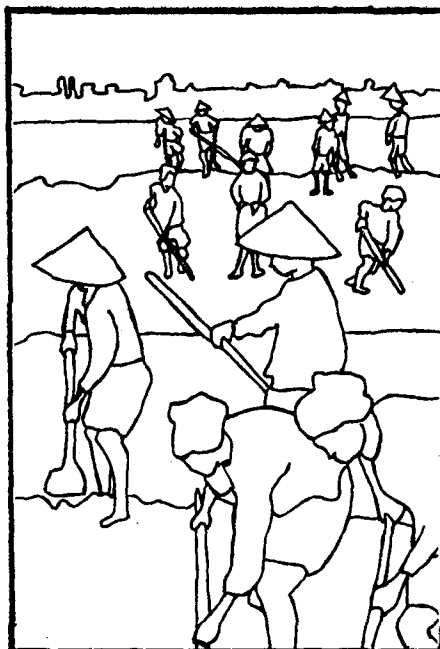
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BOOKS

A MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE ON URBANISM

By Gerald Gutenschwager

Social Justice and the City, by David Harvey. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.

To many Americans the word Marxism conjures up images of totalitarian societies, evil dictators, and the lot. Even in academia, Marxism is generally equated with ideology, with things political and not scientific. This is a product of the intellectual hegemony of which Gramsci wrote, and it has been an amazingly successful hegemony at all levels in the United States. This is also the context in which any Marxist scholar must present his work. He or she must therefore devote much effort to presenting the categories within which the subject will be discussed, and must outline what it is that constitutes adequate knowledge from the Marxist standpoint, what is the appropriate method for achieving that knowledge, the specific relationship to reality, and so forth. David Harvey has succeeded admirably in this task, and he has presented a substantial analysis of his own subject within this framework as well.

In the study of urbanism there is apparently no Marxist analysis between Engels's studies of Manchester in the 1840s and Harvey's current book (Henri Lefebvre, the French sociologist, is

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the other contemporary scholar who is beginning to fill this gap and there are others who have worked on specific aspects of the city). This is an amazing enough fact in itself. It attests to both the monopoly control exercised by the positivist-empiricist paradigm, as well as to the lack of interest by Marxist scholars in the urban phenomenon itself. In the United States the study of the city began in earnest with the work of the urban sociologists and geographers at the University of Chicago in the 1920s (except, of course, for the designers and architectural historians). Their efforts have inspired similar work and refinement since then in the broad area of human ecology, with a variety of naturalistic metaphors supplying the inspiration for the explanations offered. Often these metaphors serve to do nothing more than divert attention from the real motives of the actors: for example, racial blockbusting and attendant real estate "rip-offs" are referred to euphemistically as "invasion and succession," after the process of spatial plant association formation and re-formation by the same name.

Since the Second World War the urban modelers have captured a good deal of the attention and funds for urban research. Their approach has been largely mathematical, with a strong emphasis upon the economic rationale, or at least upon some version of the equilibrium assumption, and their roots go back to the work of the German "space" economists von Thünen and Lösch. Needless to say, neither of these approaches has produced any critical insight into why the city takes its particular form, or why it is beset with a host of political, economic, and social problems for which there appears to be no solution. Nor can either approach develop a praxis which is other than manipulative or mildly exhortative, since their analyses begin with and depend upon the status quo.

It is in this sense in particular that Harvey has written an important book. It is also interesting from the standpoint that it displays an evolutionary path in his own thinking not unlike that which has been and will be followed by many students of urbanism who have been educated in the United States (and Great Britain?) and thus denied access to important streams of European thought, in particular Marxism. The development of Harvey's thought is captured in four themes which dominate his concerns throughout the book. As he explains in the introduction, the book demonstrates a change in his conceptions of theory, of space, of social justice, and of urbanism itself. In each case a former dual-

ism characteristic of liberal thought is collapsed through a Marxist reformulation of the problems, not Marxist in the sense that they have been dealt with explicitly in such a context before, but rather from the standpoint of the radical paradigm change that Marxism introduces into social-science thought in general. Thus, Harvey comes to reject the distinctions between methodology and philosophy, and hence between facts and values, subjects and objects, discovery and communication, etc., as he embraces a materialist philosophy in which theory is verified in practice and is no longer a separate academic category but rather a part of the ongoing social construction of reality. He rejects the notion of space as neutral and distinct from the nature of human activities, in particular those tied to production, class divisions, property relationships, etc., which ongoingly define the nature of space in any social context. He discards the idea of a separate moral philosophy with derived principles applicable to all social contexts and sees a concept of justice in the structure of human society itself, in particular rejecting the liberal idea of a distributive justice separate from organization and control over the means of production. Finally, he replaces the concept of urbanism as a separate and independent category by one in which it is relationally defined as "a mirror in which other aspects of society can be reflected." The city thus becomes a scene where society organizes its ongoing activities, though also of course providing a necessary agency for implementing the particular forms of organization.

In the early part of the book Harvey's concern with injustice in the city leads him to seek out examples of how the "system" works against the poor. The poor are shown to be unable to protect themselves against negative locational externalities or to organize themselves to take advantage of the positive ones so characteristically present in the dynamic urban system. He also relates this to political processes and to game-theoretic techniques for "explaining" such phenomena, but as he himself realizes later in the book, these are partial explanations which lead only to futile suggestions for government intervention as a typical liberal solution. This is well expressed in the concluding comments to chapter 2, where the author has recognized through his own analysis that "the mechanisms governing the redistribution of income . . . seem to be moving us towards a state of greater inequality and greater injustice" (p. 94), with a conclusion that "the successful formation of adequate policies and the forecasting of their implications is going to depend on some broad interdis-

ciplinary attacks upon the social process and spatial form aspects of the city system." (p. 95) Only a Marxist framework can fulfil the demands of this familiar liberal call, and it is again interesting to note the evolution in Harvey's perspective which leads him ultimately to the same conclusion.

By the third chapter the author is already analyzing spatial systems from a Marxist perspective. His observation that efficiency is usually the sole (implicit) value of location theory and his examination of a "territorial distributive justice" both show a heightened awareness of the contradictions underlying the structure of capitalist institutions. He illustrates the basic contradiction of private ownership of the social means of production in his analysis of the antagonisms between market-provided urban goods and the fundamental criteria of social justice.

The second part of the book is labeled "Socialist Formulations," and here the author begins with an exploration of the nature of theory. He contributes a useful Marxist insight into the perspective of Thomas Kuhn on the manner in which scientific thought changes over time. He suggests that material considerations provide the fulcrum upon which scientific revolutions ultimately turn, though it is probably a mistake to rely completely on this side of the dialectic, especially when one considers the extent to which the reductionary Copernican paradigm went against the material interests of the sixteenth century, or for that matter the extent to which Marxism itself originated as an idealist enterprise. Nevertheless, his conclusion bears repeating, precisely because it illustrates so clearly the demarcation between the Marxist and positivist paradigms and the "revolutionary" conflict between them that is destined to become more important on the American academic scene:

The philosophy of social science is *potentially* much superior to that of natural science and . . . the eventual fusion of the two fields of study will come about not through attempts to "scientize" social science but instead by the socialization of natural science. This may mean the replacement of manipulation and control with the realization of human potential as the basic criterion for paradigm acceptance. In such an event all aspects of science would experience both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary phases of thought which would undoubtedly be associated with revolutionary changes in social practice.

Most of the remainder of the book is devoted to an effort to develop a "revolutionary" urban theory which will combine "cer-

tain aspects of positivism, materialism, and phenomenology" under the Marxist paradigm. Harvey's distinction between paradigm and theory is not always entirely clear. Kuhn, for example, sees theory as an outgrowth of paradigm, perhaps more closely related to practical concerns, as Harvey suggests. This ambiguity is particularly apparent on pp. 150-152 where he classifies theory as "Status Quo," "Counter-Revolutionary," and "Revolutionary," in terms that appear much closer to what Kuhn would define as paradigm. In this sense it is unlikely that Keynes's work could be labeled as revolutionary (p. 148) inasmuch as his basic premises were the same as those of the classical economists and his intent was to salvage that paradigm from the profound contradictions inherent in the Great Depression (see Brian Easlea, *Liberation and the Aims of Science*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1973).

Harvey's efforts to develop a revolutionary urban theory relate to what an urban geographer might call the form or structure, on the one hand, and the function or *raison d'être* of the city on the other. The former is dealt with in the urban literature as a problem in human ecology and/or as a problem in land economics. The latter raises the basic questions of urbanism—its origin, its relation to social forms of organization, its evolution, etc.

Harvey brings to the discussion of urban form the important distinction between use value and exchange value, showing how Marx combined these into a single dialectic meaning. He then applies this meaning to the urban land development process showing how this can be conceived as a queuing problem, not along a temporal scale but where the wealthy are first in line. The result is that "the rich can command space whereas the poor are trapped in it." He is thus able to explain the urban ghetto, not in the tautological terms used by the orthodox land economists but as a necessary product of the "class monopoly" which characterizes the distribution of resources and private property in the capitalist city. In this way he is further able to show the class or status quo bias of the usual formulations of urban form and to suggest the *elimination* of the conditions which validate these models as the appropriate praxis to be derived. These conditions center on the inequalities in wealth in general and the private-property market system in particular (the elimination of the latter was, surprisingly enough, a basic tenet in Doxiadis's planning strategy, though he would never allow himself to follow through its dialectical implications).

Harvey also demonstrates how "production determines dis-

tribution" as a special case in the consumption of urban land (and its amenities) and hence in the determination of urban form. By using the Marxian distinctions between monopoly rent (based upon a "purchaser's eagerness to buy and ability to pay"), differential rent (based upon competition), and absolute rent (based upon excess profits deriving from some special set of conditions combined with private ownership and control), he is able to show how exchange values can determine use values through the operation of monopoly and/or absolute rents on the locational patterns in the city. That is, monopoly and absolute rents arise from something other than the competitive bidding for land, hence the marginal productivity assumption is not sufficient to explain the actual pattern of activities, given the private ownership of land and the resultant ability of the owner to determine when and for how much the land is to be rented. This, plus the coincident importance of central location to absolute and monopoly rents, means that these forms of rent are actually far more important in determining how land is to be used than is ordinarily assumed. The result is that the form of the advanced capitalist city is far less equilibrated along some measure of productivity and is much more a product of the particular institution of private property. This institution explains much of the peculiar shape of American cities with their troughs of highly accessible yet grossly underutilized land around an intensively used, though not necessarily most productive, central business district, and a sprawling form reaching outward from this. Insofar as Harvey demonstrates that monopoly and absolute rents substantially determine the pattern of land use, i.e., exchange values determine use values, he also demonstrates that urban form is a product of an irrational market exchange economy. He completely undermines the prevailing explanations of urban form by showing how irrelevant they are to what is actually happening:

In capitalist economies rent arises in monopoly, differential, and absolute forms. Once it has arisen, rent serves to allocate land uses. When use determines value a case can be made for the social rationality of rent as an allocative device that leads to efficient capitalist production patterns (although the aggregate quantity of rent paid out seems an extraordinarily high price for society to pay for such an allocative mechanism). But when value determines use, the allocation takes place under the auspices of rampant speculation, artificially induced scarcities, and the like, and it loses any pretense of having anything at all to do with the efficient organization of production and distribution. (p. 190)

In treating urbanism itself, Harvey attempts to bring together conceptual frameworks relating to (1) surplus, (2) mode of economic integration, and (3) spatial organization. (p. 245) He relies heavily upon Polanyi's classification of economic integration into *reciprocal*, *redistributive*, and *market exchange*, and to a lesser extent upon Morton Fried's correlated classification of integration into *egalitarian*, *rank*, and *stratified*, respectively. (p. 205) While these concepts are consistent with Harvey's subsequent analysis, they are not grounded in the same way that the Marxian concepts were grounded in his analysis of urban form, nor for that matter in the same way that the surplus concept is grounded in his discussion of urbanism itself.

The essay on urbanism is a long and involved discussion of the relationship between the growth and formation of the city and the prevailing conditions of the political economy. It is, unfortunately, not as well integrated as the essay on urban form, and the discussion of political economy often determines the analysis of urbanism rather than the other way around. This is not to say, however, that there are not a whole host of insightful observations on urbanism that derive from this discussion. The review of the importance of the surplus concept for explaining the origin and changing fate of cities under various modes of economic integration is very useful.

Equally valuable is Harvey's discussion of the way in which urbanism may be redirected in the socialist context. Stemming from Marx's observation that alienated labor is used to produce the surplus in capitalist societies, including those not yet governed by a market exchange economy, Harvey shows how the socialist effort is to redefine the surplus concept so that surplus is generated only for "socially beneficial use values (instead of exchange values) for both present and future members of the population." (p. 235) The result of this policy is that urbanization is controlled and related solely to those investments of surplus to expand production that will benefit from various economies of scale, agglomeration, etc. Other uses of the surplus to benefit the population in general will, in fact, seek to avoid "geographic concentration . . . at all costs." Pursuing this analysis, Harvey is able to show how this unresolved antagonism between the city and the countryside has been transformed in the advanced capitalist countries into antagonisms between the metropolitan center and the Third World hinterland on the one hand, and between segments of the population within the metropolitan center itself on the other.

Various other contradictions in advanced capitalism are shown

to have a significant impact upon the contemporary city. The spread in the use of the automobile to the exclusion of other modes of transport which has been so important in shaping and defining the modern city is to a large extent a reflection of the need for large corporations to create a need for their products. This has been accomplished by making it impossible to satisfy that need in any other way. Thus, we have witnessed a "total reorganization of the metropolitan built form so that it is all but impossible to live a 'normal' social life without a car." (p. 271) Planned obsolescence is another means of creating demand and thus stimulating the reinvestment of surplus value. The effect of this on the city can be seen in the complementary processes of suburbanization at the edges and deterioration in the centers of American cities. The lifetime of substantial older housing is artificially "shortened" through financial neglect so as to bolster the interest in newer (and generally less substantial) housing in the suburbs (or in the centers themselves if enough land can be amassed). This accounts for the characteristic "bombed out" appearance of the central areas of so many American cities while they are waiting for "urban renewal," which as Harvey points out is also symbolically important, since "it was (and still is) designed to create confidence in the dominant institutions of capitalist society."

In the final chapter Harvey attempts to synthesize further his Marxian perspective on urbanism, adding both a discussion of the ontology and epistemology of Marxism as a form of structuralism, as well as a review of the work of the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre in comparison to his own. His discussion of structuralism is quite helpful and in combination with the introduction provides an excellent summary of the paradigmatic framework within which the modern capitalist city can best be understood. While Harvey's book is an introduction to this study, it is a substantial one, and one which should qualify as a first step in the direction of a "revolution" in urban theory.

Capitalist production, by collecting the population in great centers, and causing an ever increasing preponderance of town population, on the one hand concentrates the historical motive power of society; on the other hand, it disturbs the circulation of matter between man and the soil, i.e., prevents the return to the soil of its elements consumed by man in the form of food and clothing; it therefore violates the condition necessary to the lasting fertility of the soil. By this action it destroys at the same time the health of the town laborer and the intellectual life of the rural laborer.

—Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1.

CORRESPONDENCE

COMMENTS ON O'CONNOR'S REVIEW OF THE TWISTED DREAM:

INDEPENDENT COMMODITY PRODUCTION VERSUS PETTY BOURGEOIS PRODUCTION

This comment is not a general critique of James O'Connor's review of *The Twisted Dream: Capitalist Development in the United States Since 1776* by Douglas Dowd (MR, March 1975). Rather, it is a response to a specific, though major, disagreement between Dowd and O'Connor and to the idea of independent commodity production as a mode of production. O'Connor criticizes Dowd for his characterization of the United States as capitalist from the very beginning of its settlement. In place of this initial dominance of the capitalist mode of production, O'Connor substitutes independent commodity production as the mode of production. O'Connor admits that Dowd recognizes the existence of a class of independent producers, made up of farmers, artisans, teamsters, and small traders. The point at issue is that O'Connor views these independent producers as constituting not simply a social form within the emerging capitalist mode of production, but as the basis of a distinct mode of production which constituted a serious barrier to the development of capitalism in the United States.

I cannot say that I agree with Dowd's definition of the term capitalism, or even that I understand what he means by it. However, my own interpretation of the place of independent producers, or petty bourgeois producers as I would call them, in the development of capitalism in the United States leads me to support Dowd's position that the capitalist mode of production was the dominant and unchallenged mode of production from colonial

times, and that there was no separate and antagonistic mode of production that capitalism had to destroy (other than that of the native Americans). Independent producers, rather than constituting an independent mode of production, were would-be capitalists and tended to become larger, less petty, capitalists or wage laborers. Independent producers should be seen as very petty capitals, and hence as a form of capital, not as constituting a mode of production independent of capitalism. It was the very competition and accumulation of these small capitals and the home market they generated which provided the major basis for the establishment of capitalist production proper in the United States.

The idea of independent commodity production or petty production as a mode of production has a long history dating back to Engels's Supplement to *Capital*, vol. 3, part 1, "Law of Value and Rate of Profit," and continuing in the work of Maurice Dobb (particularly in "Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism" in his *Capitalism, Development and Planning*). Scattered references in Marx are cited to legitimize the idea of a petty mode of production, though Marx never does more than use the term "petty mode" loosely and does not begin to develop an argument about its being a distinct mode of production. My hope is that the discussion taking place here in MONTHLY REVIEW and other work being done will make the notion of independent commodity production or petty mode of production more explicit and allow it to be accepted, modified, or rejected as a concept of Marxian analysis.

Unlike the ambiguity of Marx and others who refer to the petty mode of production, O'Connor clearly implies that the petty producer is producing commodities. This can be seen from his term alone, "independent commodity production." What remains unclear is the *degree* of dependence of the petty producer on production for exchange, whether the producer (and this is by no means an individual but rather a household) is producing *primarily* for direct consumption and exchanging only a surplus, or is becoming more and more dependent on the exchange of most of his or her products for the satisfaction of the production and consumption needs of the household by the purchase of commodities. Another ambiguity is whether the independent commodity producer not only *may* attempt to accumulate, but must accumulate. O'Connor does refer to the producer's effort to become a capitalist rather than fall into the class of wage laborers, but he does not see independent commodity producers as being small capitals and

forced as such to compete with one another and with large capitals. He views farmers and other independent producers as initially passive, as responding to and victimized by capitalism as a force outside of themselves, rather than as active agents in the development of the capitalist mode of production which leads to their downfall.

Petty Bourgeois Production

My disagreement is with both the general idea of independent commodity production as a distinct mode of production and its application to American history. The form of production that I would see as relevant to the United States, and the basis for what O'Connor calls a mode of production, is the petty bourgeois form of capital. Here the household is in possession of the means of production, depends almost entirely on family labor, and produces more than a minor surplus for the market. Each production unit is becoming increasingly dependent on production for the market and is thereby compelled to compete as a petty capital with other petty capitals and with larger capitals. Each unit attempts to accumulate and to avoid losing the competitive battle and its productive property (and thus falling into the class of wage laborers) by greater expenditure of family labor, by sacrificing consumption (the "peasant" art of starvation), and by re-investing all returns except those minimally required for subsistence. These units are small, but germinal, units of capital. The petty bourgeois producer represents a limited and undeveloped form of capital, yet a form of capital that allows it to be included within the concept of the capitalist mode of production.

The remainder of my remarks substantiate my position along two lines. First, I attempt to show that independent commodity production cannot be conceived of as a *distinct* mode of production, that it must be considered as a form of capital, that it arises as a social form only after, and along with, the development of merchant capital, and is immediately bound to the capitalist mode of production. My concluding remarks bring out the differences in interpretation of American history that follow by replacing O'Connor's notion of independent commodity production with petty bourgeois capital. By making this substitution, independent producers, primarily petty bourgeois farmers, are seen as active agents in the development of capitalism and not as victims of a capitalism external to them; and the expansion of petty bourgeois producers becomes a force encouraging capitalist production, rather than a barrier. It follows that the farm of the West must be given

a place greater than it has occupied, relative to the plantation of the South, in establishing the preconditions for the accumulation of industrial capital.

Is Independent Commodity Production a Mode of Production?

The whole question of what is a mode of production (in general and in particular) is a difficult one. It is a step forward to challenge the conventional Marxist view that all history can be encompassed by utilizing a few categories bequeathed to us by Marx in a sketchy and contradictory manner: primitive communism, ancient slavery, feudalism, the Asiatic mode of production, capitalism, and socialism (and even the petty mode of production). However, in rejecting the incompleteness and narrowness of these categories, we should not make the opposite error of treating every social form as an independent mode of production.

There is no pretension here of presenting even the beginnings of a systematic and definitive statement of what constitutes a mode of production. It does seem that for a social form to be elevated to the position of a mode of production, rather than being seen as an aspect of some other more encompassing mode of production, the form being considered must have an existence and a dynamic that can be isolated from those of all other social forms which one considers to be modes of production. This is not to say that modes of production do not overlap: distinct modes of production do exist simultaneously and in relation to one another within a social formation. But as a minimum requirement for a social form to be a distinct mode of production, some character specific to it must exist which would set it off as a mode of production; and it must be conceivable, though not necessarily historically factual, that such a social form can arise without being part and parcel of another mode of production. If such conceptual and historical specificity are lacking, what was conceived of as a mode of production becomes either a social form within another mode of production or a social form which is so general and so little distinguishes any particular mode of production that it can be a feature of many.

The first question that can be raised concerning independent commodity production is, What is its dynamic? If the aim of production is the exchange of commodities, and if production and exchange on an expanding scale is a compulsion that producers can avoid only at their peril, then the dynamic seems to be none other than that of all capitals, small or otherwise, to compete and accumulate. If the independent commodity producers must com-

pete and accumulate, it is difficult to understand how they can be understood as anything other than Marx's first path of accumulation where "the producer becomes merchant and capitalist" (*Capital*, vol. 3 [Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971], p. 334), with the producer depending at first upon family labor and other "dependent" and unfree forms of labor, such as apprentices, and coming to depend on wage labor to a greater degree as the producer becomes more clearly a capitalist over time. Of course, there is no necessity that any individual petty bourgeois household will succeed in accumulating and not stagnate or even become wage laborers.

It may be denied that the commodity producers must come to depend increasingly on commodity production, and in doing so come under the compulsion of competition and accumulation as small capitals among other capitals. An argument explaining how small commodity producers as a group can avoid this pressure, however, has yet to be offered. Even if a persuasive explanation is possible, there still remains the objection that independent commodity production cannot be conceived as existing historically apart from (other) forms of capital and/or the capitalist mode of production. Numerous passages can be found in Marx, particularly in his mature works, *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, that outline his view of the "history" of the development of exchange. The consistent stress is on exchange originating between communities prior to any extensive exchange within communities, and that such exchange was not open to all members of the society, but was concentrated in the hands of rulers, merchants, and merchant people.* The development of local exchange comes after that of external trade and merchant capital. Local exchange in turn is encouraged by the development of merchant capital and the trade between town and country. If the independent commodity producer comes to exist only with the development of merchant capital, Marx also emphasizes that the extension of commodity production comes to be the extension of capitalist commodity production. Commodity producers need not be capitalist commodity producers, but the generalized development of commodity production within a society is integrally related to the development of capitalist commodity production. With the extension of commodity production, with the development of a home market as well as

* This is not to deny the non-exchange redistribution of use values within a society, as stressed, e.g., in the work of Karl Polanyi.

a proletariat, capitalist production has a basis on which to develop and supersede petty or merchant capitalist forms of commodity production.

Rejecting the idea of independent commodity production as a distinct mode of production does not mean denying its existence as a social phenomenon but rather giving it a different character and name, i.e., seeing it as an immature, germinal form of capital—petty bourgeois capital. Merchant capital, by encouraging and extending commodity production, acts as a spur to the development of petty bourgeois production; and both merchant capital and petty bourgeois capital foster the development of industrial capital. Petty bourgeois capital, by producing, buying, and selling commodities, is a force in the development of the home market.* Petty bourgeois producers competing with one another and with truly capitalist producers in the context of an expanding market for commodities end up destroying each other and/or being destroyed by capitals whose development they have fostered. It is by no means the case that industrial capital is a social form alien to the petty bourgeois producer. Capital proper has its roots in the petty bourgeois producer, both in terms of extending the market for commodities and in terms of the first path of capital accumulation, some petty capitals succeeding in accumulation and becoming capital proper.

Implications for U.S. History

O'Connor and Dowd both have a number of insights concerning the place of the independent commodity producer in nineteenth century American history, but these insights are not brought together and utilized by O'Connor in his treatment of independent commodity production. There is the recognition that both farmers and merchants were greatly interested in the extension of transportation and "the liberalization of land acquisition," but O'Connor does not go on to specify the nature of the common interest of merchant capital and farmers or the common interest of manufacturers and farmers in the extension of commercial agriculture.** Merchants, farmers, and manufacturers can have

* How important petty bourgeois producers are, relative to capitalists and wage laborers, in generating a home market can be answered only for each particular case.

** By farmer, I mean the family farm so prevalent in American agriculture both before and even after the nineteenth century. The question of whether the family actually owns the land or occupies it as tenant or

common interests and yet at the same time be in competition with one another as separate capitals, of different forms and of different sizes. O'Connor leaves the merchants and speculators with "their own [unrevealed] reasons" for their alliance with the farmers to extend transportation and distribute land, while the manufacturers easily dupe and betray the farmers in the former's battle with the planters. In this version the farmers remain inert and foolish: their interest in the extension of their market by the development of manufacturing and their own differences with the plantation system have no part. By failing to see farmers as small capitals and competitors, O'Connor falls into a very common and ancient populist interpretation of American farmers. This view has been well expressed by Charles and Mary Beard who also saw the pre-Civil War farmer "in a kind of pre-capitalist bliss." This rustic economy is rudely shattered from outside by capitalist industry and machinery which comes barging in, in the form of railroads and farm machinery, to convert agriculture suddenly to a capitalist basis. Without the idea of the competitive petty bourgeois producer, O'Connor (like Beard) must resort to a theory of conspiracy and the one-directional impact of capital on the farmer.*

O'Connor picks up on Dowd's important statements about widespread ownership of the means of production providing the first major domestic market for industrial capital, and how this market gave large-scale capital the opportunity to destroy independent commodity production. But later O'Connor goes on to take a very narrow view of the part that independent commodity production has in the genesis of American capitalism. Because independent commodity producers could not at the same time be wage laborers, this "mode of production" weakened and *may* have reversed (according to O'Connor) capitalist "impulses" during the first half of the nineteenth century. Here O'Connor fails to consider all aspects of the process of primitive accumulation as it

mortgagor is an important one. If the direction of mobility is from tenant to owner, then the petty bourgeois form is still in its prime. If the direction is from owner to tenant, or if ownership is never a real possibility, then the producer is coming to share much more the position of a wage laborer than a petty bourgeois producer.

* For all its weaknesses, Louis Hacker's *The Triumph of American Capitalism* remains the best presentation of colonial and nineteenth century American capitalism and the place therein of the farmer.

establishes the conditions for accumulation proper, and instead focuses on just one, the separation of the producer from the means of production and the concomitant creation of a proletariat. But O'Connor had already admitted that the first major home market came from agriculture. The existence of capitalist manufacturing, in other words, depended on the processing of agricultural products and the production of commodities that farmers bought to use as means of consumption and production. Even the expansion in the number of petty bourgeois farmers throughout the nineteenth century did not prevent a large stream of farmers and their children from migrating from country to capitalist town—a result of competition among petty bourgeois capitals in agriculture, rising capital costs, and the relative poverty of many farmers, even in comparison with industrial workers, a poverty enforced by the farmers' efforts to compete with one another as well as with the railroad, moneylender, and food processor.

Some important differences in interpretation of American history that follow from the preceding critique are that Marxist historians should give greater weight to family-farm agriculture of the West and less emphasis to the plantation of the South in the process of primitive accumulation in the United States. It may even be that the humble farmer had a greater impact on the development of industrial capital than did "King Cotton." Also, I disagree with O'Connor in seeing the independent commodity production mode as dominant in the early nineteenth century. By then, if not from the colonial period, the capitalist mode of production, as represented by one of its early forms, merchant capital, is the dominant mode of production. Within this, independent commodity producers are petty bourgeois producers compelled to attempt to accumulate. If there is any question of a prior mode of production in America, it is that of the indigenous Americans, and the very expansion of the petty bourgeois farmer was the agency for destroying this mode in the interest of capitalism. At some point before the Civil War, or at the time of the Civil War, merchant capital was subordinated to industrial capital, as much by the transformation of merchant capital into industrial capital as by the weakness of merchant capital in comparison with industrial capital, and as much by the expansion of petty bourgeois producers as by their demise.

In conclusion, the basic difference between O'Connor and myself can be summarized as follows. If one holds a view of independent commodity production as an independent mode of pro-

duction, one sees this form as being defeated by capital as an outside force during the course of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, if one holds a view of petty bourgeois capital as a form of capital within the capitalist mode of production, one sees that the development of the petty bourgeois form of capital is also the development of industrial capital proper and is a force behind its own demise.

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September 1975

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A NOTE ON INDEPENDENT COMMODITY PRODUCTION AND PETTY CAPITALISM

The premise of Bob Sherry's criticisms of my review of Doug Dowd's *The Twisted Dream* is that independent commodity production is a figment of my imagination and that self-organized production for exchange is in fact a kind of primitive capitalism (or petty capitalist production, in Sherry's words). I agree with Sherry that petty capitalist production is governed by the "laws of motion" of capital (e.g. competition, concentration and centralization, accumulation, crisis, etc.). I disagree that self-organized commodity production is always and everywhere petty capitalist production, i.e., subject to the imperatives of capital accumulation.

The petty capitalist unit is first and foremost an accumulating unit. It produces for the impersonal market and is subject to the competition of other capitals, big and small. The criteria which govern decision-making within the unit are quantitative, i.e. bottom-line or profitability criteria. Because it is a unit of accumulation, the petty capitalist unit must be innovation-minded. The owners seek to free themselves from their dependence on traditional methods of production, craft skills, etc., and above all their dependence on their own labor power. They therefore devalue labor, on the one hand, and attempt to replace their own self-

organized labor with wage labor, on the other. During hard times, they may exploit themselves intensely, but they are always looking for ways to shift the burden of exploitation onto hired wage labor. In short, they are trying to become young capitalists, not necessarily because they want to, but because they have to in order to survive the competitive jungle of the capitalist market.

By contrast, the independent commodity production unit is a subsistence unit, not an accumulating unit. This is objectively possible when there is little or no pressure to accumulate. Markets may be local and competition may be regulated or abolished by the producers themselves. On the other hand, there may be impersonal regional or national markets, yet the direct producers may not be subject to competition because product demand is rising so rapidly or because there may be no economies of large-scale production and hence no competition from capitals, big or small. In any or all of these cases, the survival of small-scale subsistence units producing objects for exchange is possible or likely. This is also true in most direct services where it is difficult or impossible to abstract from the personality or individuality of the producer.

In independent commodity production the producers do not strip themselves of their skills and throw themselves at the mercy of themselves, as capital strips workers of their individuality and individual skills and throws them at the mercy of the market for abstract labor power. In independent production final products (i.e., excluding raw materials) have the stamp of the individual producers on them. They are personal products destined for some particular individual in mind (e.g., king, gentry, magistrate, etc. and other small producers in the immediate locality). Independent production hence is production for the market, but (again excluding raw materials) not the impersonal market of capitalism. This is a crucial difference between independent production and petty capitalism, once we look at the problem from the standpoint of two different ways of working and ways of life. Historically, the main concern of the independent producers was to defend their traditional way of life against "outside forces" (e.g., the central state and central taxation, national census-taking, compulsory deliveries of foods to the proletariat in the cities, national markets, laws of competition, etc., in short, capital). In contrast, the petty capitalists collaborated with these outside forces, sometimes successfully, most of the time unsuccessfully. That independent commodity production and its way of life (local control or political power, e.g., "all power to the section," economy based on simple reproduction,

republicanism, and an anti-clerical ideology, regulation of competition, etc.) were destroyed by capital during the accumulation process proves only that capitalism was a more progressive mode of production, not that independent commodity production never existed, as Sherry believes.

The problem with Sherry's theory of capitalism is that he fails to make a distinction between mode of production and mode of exchange or distribution. In his view, "merchant capital" is an "early form" of the "capitalist mode of production." I believe that this is incorrect. Modes of production mean ways of working or producing. Mode of exchange means the way of exchanging or distributing what is produced. Venetian merchants bought and sold goods for profit, but by itself this tells us nothing about either the productive forces (tools and skills used, etc.) or the production relations. The existence of a class of individuals specializing in the purchase and sale of goods is consistent with slave production relations, stagnant or dynamic productive forces, self-organized production relations, full-scale capitalist production relations, etc. That is why I think it is a mistake to call merchant capitalism a mode of production. In Europe, from roughly 1400 to 1800, there were hundreds of thousands of scattered producers producing partly for local barter, partly for local markets, and partly for auto-consumption. And (putting aside international trade) there were thousands of merchants buying and selling these goods, produced largely under conditions of self-organized independent production (most of whom in agriculture, of course, were heavily taxed by the landlord class, i.e., the state). The independent producers began to differentiate themselves into independent producers and petty capitalists largely under the impact of outside forces, i.e. the accumulation of money in the hands of merchants, primitive accumulation in the New World, technological innovations, etc.

I believe that independent commodity production was the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Europe in a twofold sense (and that in the United States it was a separate mode of production which for a long while held its own against capitalism): first, it was the transition between subsistence production and capitalist commodity production; second, it was the stage between communal property in the means of production and capitalist monopoly of the means of production (i.e., before there can be the concept of the monopoly of private property in the means of production, there must be the concept of private property in the means of production). As a mode of production,

it had its own unique qualities and "laws of motion" (which can be summed up in one phrase—stagnation of the productive forces). Of course, it was historically transitory and ultimately generated the conditions for its own destruction. But so is capitalism historically transitory and so does capitalism produce the conditions for its own destruction and replacement. We can just as easily consider capitalism as the transition between independent commodity production and socialism; after all, the epoch of independent commodity production lasted about twice as long as the capitalist epoch.

James O'Connor

October 1975

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San Jose, California

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(Continued from inside front cover)

be sent back to Chile—to certain imprisonment, torture, and possibly death. Under these circumstances protests from abroad to the Argentine authorities can be very important. Cables and letters should be sent to Presidente Jorge Videla, Casa Rosada, Buenos Aires; and General Albano Harguin-dequy, Ministro del Interior, Balcarce 50, Buenos Aires. At the present juncture, however, it may be even more important to put pressure on the U.S. State Department to use its undoubtedly great influence to secure the Chileans' release by the Argentine government. We have it from what we believe to be credible reports that Washington, for whatever opportunistic reasons, does not want the new Argentine government to acquire an "image" of tyranny and brutality like that of the Pinochet junta in Chile. The State Department should therefore be left in no doubt that nothing would be calculated to further such an image more than victimization by the Argentine authorities of the powerless Chilean refugees who are at their mercy. Strong representations along these lines should be made to either William Luers or Hewson Ryan, Deputy Assistant Secretaries of State for Latin American Affairs, with copies to Undersecretary William Rogers and Secretary Henry Kissinger.

Another case which has come to our attention, because of contact with the victim when he was a student in the United States several years ago, is that of the Dutch journalist Peter Custers, imprisoned in Bangladesh on unspecified charges. A number of Peter's friends have written us expressing the gravest fears for his health and safety. In this case, as in all too many others around the world today, the *only* protection the victim can hope for at this stage is the widest possible international publicity. Letters of inquiry and protest should be sent to the President of Bangladesh and to that country's Ambassadors abroad. Further information can be obtained from C. C. Meijer, c/o Fam. Bilars, Milletstraat 50, Amsterdam, Holland.

In this space in our issue of July-August 1974 we called attention to the indictment brought against Frank Giese, professor of French at Portland (Oregon) State University (and co-founder of the United Front bookstore in Portland which features MR Press books), stemming from January 1973 bombings of army and navy recruiting centers in Portland. We noted that this was, among other things, one of a long series of conspiracy cases brought by the federal government going back to the famous Chicago case of 1968, none of which up to then had resulted in a conviction, and we expressed the view that the government would not be likely to have greater success in the Giese case. This turned out to be only partly true. Giese was cleared of all specific charges arising from the bombings but convicted of the vaguest kind of conspiracy imaginable—"to harm the federal government"—and given the maximum sentence, five years in jail and \$10,000 fine. In a strange sequel, which certainly makes this case unique among politically motivated prosecutions of recent years, Frank Giese has apparently lost the right to appeal. This had nothing to do with the merits of the case but was solely due to the failure of Giese's lawyer to file the appeal on time. The reason for this failure, according to sources active in Giese's defense, was the fact that the lawyer was suffering from emotional and psychological problems and was "unable to get it together." The Giese case therefore takes on a wholly new dimension having to do with the constitutional right of appeal. For further information contact the Giese Defense Committee, 2616 N.W. Northrup, Portland, Ore. 97210.

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